

## **JUST DO IT!**

The path to writing success a very individual journey. But there are a few strategies that can help maximize the possibilities:

### **1. Just do it!**

Many have carried a book idea around for years. They don't want to share that idea because they're afraid someone might steal it. (News flash: Ideas are not copyrightable. If you've had one, you can be sure someone else has had the same.) The only way to write a book, article, short story, or poem is to stop talking, sit down, and write.

### **2. Be persistent.**

How do you write a book? By writing the first page, then the second, and on and on until it's finished. Plenty of people start books. Too few finish them. The persistence to keep going, no matter how far away that finished goal may seem, day after day, page after page, is what makes a writer.

### **3. Write what you know.**

Your writing can only breathe reality and authenticity if you know what you're writing about.

### **4. Pursue new knowledge.**

Never stop learning. Everything you hear, read, experience, or research can be material for a writing project. Even if you can't see a present use for that information, store it away for possible use in a book you'll write someday.

### **5. Listen to editors.**

If an editor tells you something you've written isn't good enough, don't rush to self-publish. Start rewriting! Too many talented writers never make it to print because they're too proud to submit their work for an expert critique or too discouraged to go back and improve their writing.

It is not innate talent or perfect grammatical skills that make a great writer, though those do help. Many people with ample talent and fine writing skills will never write a book—because they never get around to it! Like the hare and tortoise of Aesop's fable, they will be passed along the path by the writer who perhaps doesn't have Hemingway's genius, but has a passion to write that keeps him plugging along, writing, rewriting, tearing apart and putting back together. Each rewrite is a little better until one day an editor takes a look at the work and says, "This is fabulous!" And suddenly (actually, make that many months later), they find their byline on a printed page or book cover.

Bottom line: there's only one real strategy for writing. Just do it!